Learn About:
Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA)

Mesulam Center at Northwestern University

Aphasia-Friendly Materials

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What is Primary Progressive Aphasia?

PPA is a neurodegenerative **brain** condition. It is a type of **dementia**. PPA is **not due to stress or anxiety**.

PPA can make it **hard to**:

- speak
- understand
- read
- write

PPA Progression

The first signs of PPA may be small. PPA is a progressive disorder. **Symptoms will become worse over time.** Each person with PPA will have different changes at different times.

A person with PPA may also have changes in:

- memory
- attention
- judgment
- behavior
- personality
- movement
- swallowing
There are at least 3 types of PPA: logopenic, semantic, and agrammatic. A person with PPA may have symptoms from more than one subtype. A person with PPA may not have all the symptoms of one subtype.
Causes of PPA

PPA is caused by the **buildup of proteins** that are not working correctly. These proteins are caused by: Alzheimer’s Disease (**AD**) or Frontotemporal Lobar Degeneration (**FTLD**).

PPA is **not** caused by stroke, cancer, injury, or head trauma.

There is a **relationship** between the **location of proteins** and **symptoms**.

AD and FTLD can only be diagnosed by looking at the brain **after death** with a microscope. Scientists are studying ways to diagnose AD and FTLD when people are still alive by using special positron emission tomography (PET) **brain scans**, cerebral spinal fluid (CSF), and blood **biomarkers**.
The Mesulam Center

Dr. Mesulam named Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA) in 1982. Our PPA study is one of the first and largest in the country. We offer clinical research, Quality of Life programs, clinical trials, and a brain autopsy program.

Clinical Care & Research

The mission of the Mesulam Center is to:
- Offer interdisciplinary, personalized care.
- Study the neurobiology of brain aging and dementias.
- Train clinicians and scientists of the future.

Clinical Care:
Neurobehavior and Memory Clinic
676 North St. Clair Street
Suite 945
Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 695 - 9627

Research:
Mesulam Center
300 E Superior Street
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Chicago, IL 60611
(312) 908 - 9339

Thank you!

Thank you for your interest in the Mesulam Center! We are here to help you through this journey.

Still have questions?
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